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Expert Reveals . . .

U.S. Spends Whopping $9.5 Billion for Foreign Spying—But CIA Gets Only $800 Million

By EDWARD TROPEANO

The United States spends a staggering $9.5 billion on foreign intelligence operations — but the CIA gets only $800 million of that, according to the independent Center for National Security Studies.

Robert Borosage, director of the center, said the secrecy-shrouded figures on the phenomenal cost of America's spy operations were obtained from such expert sources as the Senate Intelligence Committee and from key senators and congressmen with access to the espionage budget figures.

"The $9.5 billion figure is a very accurate estimate," Borosage told The ENQUIRER. "We know that the whole U.S. intelligence community, domestic and abroad, spends about $10 billion a year.

"The FBI has admitted a budget of about half a billion, so that leaves the foreign operations with the remaining $9.5 billion."

What's surprising when the closely guarded figures are broken down is the Central Intelligence Agency's budget. The CIA gets $800 million a year for its vital cloak-and-dagger and intelligence gathering work — less than the Army, Navy or Air Force allocations for intelligence operations, Borosage said.

"The Dept. of Defense spends about $8-9 billion a year on foreign intelligence," he said. "And two of the biggest spenders under Defense are the National Security Agency (NSA) and the National Reconnaissance Organization (NRO).

"NSA deals mainly with communications intelligence. They intercept cables, radio transmissions, anything that comes in on the wires. NSA employs some 25,000 people around the world. For all of this, NSA spends about $2.3 billion a year."

The second biggest-spending spy agency, NRO, is so super secret that a Defense Dept. spokesman said, when asked by The ENQUIRER about its budget:

"I won't tell you a thing about it, and as far as I'm concerned it doesn't exist."

Borosage disclosed: "The main function of NRO is satellite intelligence, which includes intercepting messages, aerial photography, etc. Their budget is $1.5 billion."

After that, he said, come the three branches of the military service, with intelligence budgets of close to $1 billion each.

Most of their spying is aimed at determining potential enemy troop strength — the size and location of ground, air and naval forces.

Other government agencies engaged in intelligence work are the Defense Intelligence Agency, the State Dept. and the International Drug Traffic Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Robert Borosage, quoted in the story above, is coauthor of the book, "The CIA File," and has frequently appeared before the House and Senate Intelligence Committees to give expert testimony on matters dealing with intelligence operations. The organization he directs, the Center for National Security Studies, based in Washington, D.C., studies national security issues, particularly the intelligence services.